Package for Sugarcane Farmers

892. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently granted a package to help sugarcane farmers and the sugar industry including the sugar-cooperatives, out of the critical situation, including debt relief to farmers and clearance of sugarcane arrears;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this regard; and

(c) the incidence of payment-arrear ratio for sugarcane price to farmers during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The Union Government has announced the following package for farmers including sugarcane farmers:—

(i) One time settlement scheme for small and marginal farmers;

(ii) Special scheme for relief to farmers affected by natural calamities for at least two consecutive years in the last five years; and

(iii) Scheme for providing relief to farmers in arrears.

These measures are applicable to debts as on 31.3.2004.

All sugar producing States have been offered assistance by way of Open Market Borrowing to help sugar factories to clear cane price arrears of 2002-2003 sugar season subject to terms and conditions thereof. This assistance would be available to the mills in the cooperative and public sectors in the States where the practice of State Advised Prices (SAP) of sugarcane is prevalent and to all sugar mills in the States where no such practice exists. The States of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra availed of the assistance to the tune of Rs. 229.97 crores and Rs. 300 crores respectively. Besides, the concerned financial institutions like NABARD, RBI, NCDC etc. address the credit related problems of sugar industry on an ongoing basis.

(c) The Government of India have already taken steps to help the sugarcane growers and sugar mills in the country like reducing levy

obligation of sugar factories to 10% of their production, providing buffer subsidy to the sugar mills to clear cane price arrears and providing export subsidy/incentives on export shipments of sugar.

A statement showing the total cane price payable, total cane price paid, total cane price arrears and the %age of arrears on cane price payable as on 30.9.2004 for the three earlier sugar seasons is given below:

(Rs. in crores)

Seasons	Position as on	Total Price payable	Total Price paid	Arrears	% of arrears on price payable
2003-2004	30-9-2004	11,526.68	10,945.86	580.82	5.0
2002-2003	30-9-2003	13,991.73	12,211.08	1,780.65	12.7
2001-2002	30-9-2002	13,899.42	12,779.82	1,119.61	8.1

Base depots of FCI in Madhya Pradesh

†893. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of base depots the Food Corporation of India have in Madhya Pradesh for the supply of foodgrains under Public Distribution System;

(b) whether the number of these base depots is adequate for the utilization under Public Distribution System;

(c) if not, whether Government propose to establish more base depots of FCI; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) There are 36 base depots of the FCI in the State of Madhya Pradesh for the supply of foodgrains under the Public Distribution System.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.